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E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: TRILATERAL DISCUSSIONS

1. SUMMARY. SENIOR LEVEL OFFICIALS FROM THE US (ELLSWORTH), UK (HOCKADAY) AND FRG (STEINHAUS) HELD INFORMAL TRILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON 9 OCTOBER IN WASHINGTON ON CURRENT DEFENSE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES CONFRONTING NATO. TALKS WERE OPEN AND FRANK AND MOST USEFUL IN COMMUNICATING AND CLARIFYING VIEWS OF ALL AND IDENTIFYING POINTS OF POSSIBLE MISUNDERSTANDINGS ON CURRENT US INITIATIVES, IN PARTICULAR ON RECENTLY TABLED US DRAFT MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE PAPER, AND ON US APPROACHES TO THE RECENT NUNN AMENDMENTS. TALKS PROVIDED A HARMONIZING AND POSITIVE APPROACH AND BASIS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS IN GENERATING MINISTERIAL SUPPORT AND DISCUSSION OF US PROPOSALS FOR A LONG-RANGE DEFENSE

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CONCEPT FOR NATO AT DECEMBER DPC MEETING.

2. DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON TWO PRINCIPAL TOPICS WITH MOST TIME SPENT ON THE FIRST:

(A) KEY ELEMENTS OF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE INCLUDING THE US PROPOSED LONG-RANGE DEFENSE CONCEPT FOR NATO. THE NUNN AMENDMENTS TO DOD APPROPRIATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT, 1975 WERE ALSO DISCUSSED.

(B) THE INSTABILITY OF NATIONS ALONG THE NORTHERN RIM OF

OF THE MEDITERRANEAN (GREECE, ITALY, PORTUGAL, TURKEY, YUGOSLAVIA, AND SPAIN) INCLUDING ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OF THOSE COUNTRIES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FORTHCOMING NPG MEETING IN ROME IN NOVEMBER WERE ALSO DISCUSSED.

3. MATTERS OF SIGNIFICANCE COVERED IN DISCUSSING THE US PROPOSED MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE PAPER WERE THE CONVENTIONAL EMPHASIS IN THE US DRAFT AND ITS EFFECT ON MC 14/3 STRATEGY, CONVENTIONAL BALANCE, WARNING TIME, DURATION OF CONFLICT, RESOURCE GUIDANCE, MEANING OF FLEXIBILITY, COOPERATION (RATIONALIZATION AND STANDARDIZATION), PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING THE US DRAFT AND OTHER PAPERS AS WELL AS MECHANISMS TO MONITOR PROGRESS. AN UNDERLYING THEME TO THE US PRESENTATION WAS GENERATING MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

4. THE UK MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS IN COMMENTING ON THE US INITIATIVE:

(A) THEY STRESSED THE NEED NOT TO BE TOO PRECISE, IN THIS DOCUMENT, ON EXACTLY WHAT THE CONVENTIONAL BALANCE IS. IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO TAKE A BROAD VIEW THAN TO DWELL ON DETAILED NUMBERS.

(B) THE DURATION OF COMBAT IS NOT AS IMPORTANT A CONCEPT AS WITHSTANDING THE FIRST SHOCK. THEY AGREE ON THE NEED TO HAVE A CONVENTIONAL CAPABILITY SUFFICIENT TO REASSURE THAT THERE NEED NOT BE AN EARLY RECOURSE TO NUCLEAR
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WEAPONS.

(C) THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT US INTENTIONS TOWARDS MC 14/3 AND THE NATO TRIAD WERE SOUND, BUT THAT THE LANGUAGE WE USED APPEARED TO BE INTRODUCING NEW THOUGHTS CONTRARY TO MC 14/3. THEY FAVORED RESTORING EQUAL EMPHASIS ON EACH LEG OF THE TRIAD AND STRESSING THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THEM IN THE PAPER.

(D) THEY WARNED US NOT TO SHORT-CIRCUIT ESTABLISHED NATO PROCEDURES, SUCH AS MILITARY APPRECIATION, MC 161, AND TOSE PARTS OF THE DEFENSE PLANNING SYSTEM THAT HAVE WORKED.

(E) THEY HAVE USED THE EUROGROUP TO INITIATE COOPERATION AND STANDARDIZATION BECAUSE EUROPEANS SHOULD COOPERATE WHENEVER POSSIBLE GIVEN GEOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND THE NEED FOR A EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL BASE. THEY REASSURED THE US AGAIN THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN CUTTING OFF THE EUROPEAN MARKET TO THE US.

(F) WHILE THEY HAD CONTRIBUTED TO THE OVERALL REAL INCREASE IN EUROPEAN DEFENSE BUDGETS BEFORE AND BEEN ABLE TO COMPENSATE FOR INFLATION, THE PRESENT UK ECONOMIC SITUATION IS VERY MUCH MORE STARK THAN THE LAST FEW YEARS. IT IS SIMPLY NOT UK POLICY TO MAKE A THREE PERCENT REAL INCREASE PER YEAR IN DEFENSE BUDGETS.

4. THE FRG MADE THE FOLLOWING GENERAL POINTS:

(A) US INITIATIVE ON MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE IS GOOD AND THEY AGREED IN GENERAL TO THE CHANGES MADE IN CONTRA-DISTINCTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF DRAFT, THE APPROACH OF WHICH THEY CONSIDERED STERILE. BUT, THEY POINTED OUT THAT WE MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO OVERRULE USEFUL NATO PROCEDURES. OTHERWISE, WE MIGHT DESTROY QTE INSTITUTIONS UNQTE WHICH HAVE SERVED IN THE PAST AND MAY BE NEEDED FOR THE FUTURE. THEY SAID US MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO PUT INTO QUESTION THE BASIC AGREEMENTS OF THE ALLIANCE SUCH AS THE STRATEGY AND THE QTE PROVISIONAL GUIDELINES. UNQTE.

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(B) THEY EXPRESSED SOME DOUBT ABOUT OUR DEPARTING FROM MC 14/3 BY OVERSTRESSING THE CONVENTIONAL LEG OF THE TRIAD.

(C) THEY NOTED MAJOR SECTIONS OF THE DRAFT GUIDANCE ARE STILL MISSING.

(D) ON RESOURCES, THEY CALLED FOR DIFFERENT MEASURES OF COUNTRY EFFORT FROM GNP. THEY DOUBTED THEY COULD MEET 3 PERCENT REAL RISE CRITERION, BUT INTENDED TO KEEP THEIR FORCE MODERN.

(E) THEY DO NOT SEE REAL PROGRESS IN STANDARDIZATION, DESPITE THE NICE WORDS.

(F) FINALLY, THEY NOTED THE FLANKS AND THE MARITIME ASPECTS ARE NOT ADEQUATELY COVERED IN THE DRAFT, AND WHILE THEY ARE FLATTERED BY THE ATTENTION TO THE CENTER REGION, IT MAY PUT TOO MUCH PRESSURE ON THEM.

5. THE US DELEGATION STRESSED THAT THE ISSUES RAISED IN THE US DRAFT MUST BE PRESERVED FOR DISCUSSION AT THE DECEMBER MINISTERIALS AND NOT CLOSED OUT EVEN THOUGH WE WOULD LIKE TO DEBATE THEM BEFOREHAND WITH A VIEW TOWARD EVENTUALLY SHARPENING THEM UP. THE DRAFT PREPARED BY THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF AND, OF COURSE, THE MILITARY APPRECIATION PAPER SHOULD BE GIVEN DUE CONSIDERATION AS WELL. WE EXPRESSED STRONG PREFERENCE FOR THE US DRAFT BECAUSE THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF DRAFT IS QTE BUSINESS AS

USUAL UNQTE; BUT WE SEE NO REASON WHY ALL THREE PAPERS CANNOT BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BY MINISTERS AS APPROPRIATE IN THEIR DECEMBER DISCUSSION, AS PART OF THE ON-GOING WORK FOR THE SPRING MINISTERIALS.

IT WAS EMPHASIZED THAT IN PROPOSING A LONG-RANGE DEFENSE CONCEPT FOR NATO WE IMPLY THAT THE REAL SITUATION IS DIFFERENT NOW THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE ALLIANCE AND IS THE BASIS FOR MAKING ASSUMPTIONS ON STRATEGY, DETERRENCE, AND A DEFENSE CONCEPT. NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE THE TRANSITION AND REVISION IN OUR MODE OF
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THINKING. WE NEED A LONG-RANGE CONCEPT TO COINCIDE WITH THE EVOLVING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION. THIS SHOULD PERMIT US TO PUT TOGETHER A STALWART CONVENTIONAL CAPABILITY, THAT WILL PROVIDE THE UNDERPINNING FOR THE POLITICAL STAMINA OF NATO NATIONS AND SECURE THE POLITICAL WILL AND SUPPORT OF THE PUBLICS AND PARLIAMENTS. EMPHASIS MUST BE PUT ON THE CONVENTIONAL SIDE AS THAT IS WHERE THE DEFICIENCIES ARE AND WHERE WE PUT MOST OF OUR MEN AND MONEY.

6. IT WAS GENERALLY AGREED: (A) THAT THE US WILL PRODUCE THE MISSING GAPS AND SECTIONS IN THE PAPER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (B) THAT SUPPORT FOR THE DRAFT COULD BEST BE ENLISTED BY CAREFUL PHRASING SPECIFICALLY OF THE LANGUAGE PERTAINING TO THE STRATEGY, THE NATO TRIAD, AND THE ROLE OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES. THE WORDING OF PARAGRAPH 30B ON THE BALANCE AND USE OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES WAS AGREED TO BE IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT. THE INCLUSION OF PARAGRAPHS ON THE FLANKS AND MARITIME ASPECTS SHOULD ALSO BE PURSUED. (C) THAT THE US WOULD THEREAFTER CORRECT MISIMPRESSIONS AND PROVIDE MISSING PARAGRAPHS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE MINISTERS AT THE DECEMBER MEETING AS AN INPUT ALONG

WITH THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF DRAFT AND THE MILITARY APPRECIATION. (D) THAT NATO'S STRATEGY MUST CONTINUE TO BE BASED ON THE TRIAD, THOUGH THERE IS A NEED TO CONCENTRATE ON THE NEED FOR ENSURING A STALWART CONVENTIONAL CAPABILITY WITHIN THE TRIAD. (E) SUBSTANTIAL CONSENSUS WAS ALSO REFLECTED ON THE ISSUES OF WARNING TIME AND QTE DURATION OF WAR. UNQTE.

7. THE UK OFFERED TO HOST A SECOND TRILATERAL MEETING IN LONDON SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE AFTER WAITING TO SEE HOW THE PROGRESS ON THE DRAFT MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE WORKS OUT AMONGST OUR DELEGATIONS IN BRUSSELS, AND IF IT IS COMFORTABLE TO DO SO. AS TO WHAT EXTENT THE OTHER ALLIES SHOULD KNOW THAT WE HAVE HELD THIS MEETING, IT WAS AGREED THAT THERE IS NO REASON NOT TO ADMIT THAT WE

TALKED TOGETHER AS WE OFTEN DO FROM TIME TO TIME AS ISSUES COME UP; HOWEVER, WE SHOULD NOT VOLUNTEER THAT SUCH A MEETING HAS TAKEN PLACE.

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